

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 SAM-01 ( ISO ) W

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O R 151510Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5718 IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

COMIDEASTFOR

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMTM DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SANA 1487

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA, YE

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER ON SAUDI MILITARY ASSISTANCE

REF : STATE 139599 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: DURING JUNE 15 CALL TO BRIEF FOREIGN MINISTER  
ASNAG AS INSTRUCTED BY REFTEL, FOREIGN MINISTER DESCRIBED CUR-  
RENT YEMENI EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT SAUDI MOVEMENT RE MODERN-  
IZATION OF YEMENI ARMY INCLUDING MISSIONS TO RIYADH BY BOTH  
YEMENI FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF. EXPRESSING  
FRUSTRATION WITH SAUDI DELAYS AND SUSPICIONS OF YARG,

ASNAG ALSO INFORMED ME THAT HE NOW PLANNING STATE VISIT BY  
PRESIDENT HAMDI TO ABU DHABI IN EFFORT DEMONSTRATE TO SAUDIS  
YEMEN UNWILLING TO WAIT INDEFINITELY FOR SAUDI HELP. FINALLY,

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ASNAG RECOMMENDED THAT TOMORROW, JUNE 16, I ALSO

BRIEF PRESIDENT HAMDY ON SUBJECT OF SAUDI MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YEMEN. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MORNING JUNE 15 I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLAH AL-ASNAG TO BRIEF HIM ALONG LINES PARA 4 REFTEL. ASNAG EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION FOR BRIEFING AND FOR CURRENT USG EFFORTS WITH SAUDIS RE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YEMEN. ASNAG AGREED THAT RESULTS OF MAJLIS ELECTION WOULD IN NO WAY CHANGE YARG'S BASIC POLICY OF CLOSE COOPERATION WITH SAG AND WAS NO REASON FOR SAUDI DELAY IN MODERNIZING YEMENI ARMY. ASNAG THEN INFORMED ME THAT HE COINCIDENTALLY THAT MORNING HAD BEEN PREPARING A LETTER FOR PRESIDENT HAMDY'S SIGNATURE TO BE CARRIED IN NEXT FEW DAYS TO PRINCE SULTAN BY PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER MUHAMMAD SALIM BASINDWA. THE LETTER (TEXT OF WHICH HE READ TO ME) PROPOSES THAT YEMENI PRIME MINISTER VISIT SAUDI ARABIA IN NEAR FUTURE TO DISCUSS "COORDINATION BETWEEN BOTH GOVERNMENTS IN FIELDS OF FOREIGN POLICY, EDUCATION AND INFORMATION". IN ADDITION, LETTER SUGGESTS THAT PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT BE FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY THAT OF DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF AHMAD AL-GHASHMI WHO PREPARED TO DISCUSS ALL ASPECTS OF SAUDI/YEMENI COORDINATION IN THE MILITARY SPHERE.

2. ASNAG CONTINUED THAT MEANWHILE, IN EFFORT MOBILIZE SUPPORT FOR YEMEN WITHIN SAUDI ESTABLISHMENT, YARG WILL BE MAKING EFFORTS TO CULTIVATE SUCH IMPORTANT FIGURES AS AMIR KHALID AL-SUDAIRI, UNCLE OF PRINCE SULTAN AND GOVERNOR OF NAJRAN, AS WELL AS RASHID FARA'UN AND OTHERS "OF THE INNER CIRCLES". ASNAG SAID THAT IN ADDITION HE WILL WRITE A CONFIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO AHMAD NUMAN, YEMEN'S RETIRED ELDER STATESMAN WHO LIVES IN JIDDA AND WHO IS ON GOOD TERMS WITH KING KHALID IN ORDER THAT NUMAN MAY ALSO INTERCEDE WITH BOTH KING AND FAHD. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WISH TO GET INVOLVED IN INTERNAL SAUDI POLITICAL MANEUVERINGS AND FOR THIS REASON WILL CONTINUE TO USE PRINCE SULTAN AS THE MAIN CHANNEL. (IN THIS REGARD ASNAG SAID HE HAS RECENTLY HEARD REPORTS

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OF A FALL-OUT BETWEEN KING KHALID AND PRINCE SULTAN WITH FAHD SUPPORTING THE KING.)

3. ASNAG CONTINUED THAT DURING RECENT MEETING OF DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF GHASHMI WITH PRINCE SULTAN IN CAIRO, THE LATTER WAS STILL QUESTIONING THE HAMDY REGIME'S ANTI-COMMUNISM, NOTING THAT AL-ASNAG AND BASINDWA WERE FORMER SOCIALISTS IN ADEN AND WONDERING IF THEY COULD

BE TRUSTED. (AT THIS POINT, ASNAG DIGRESSED TO SAY THAT AT TIMES HE BECOMES TERRIBLY FRUSTRATED AT SAUDI SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS AND IS ALMOST TEMPTED TO RESIGN AND SEE IF THE SAUDIS CAN FIND MORE RELIABLE FRIENDS IN YEMEN.) ASNAG ADDED THAT SAUDIS INDULGED IN SAME QUESTIONING OF HAMDI DURING LATTER'S RECENT VISIT TO RIYADH. HAMDI REACTED IN SURPRISE AND SOME

DISPLEASURE OBSERVING THAT HE HAD EXPECTED SAUDI CONGRATULATIONS FOR ALL HE HAS DONE OVER THE LAST YEAR TO REMOVE "UNACCEPTABLE ELEMENTS FROM YEMEN" RATHER THAN HAVING SAUDIS CONTINUE TO QUESTION HIM ABOUT HIS MOTIVES FOR REMOVING THESE VERY ELEMENTS. SAUDIS IMMEDIATELY BACKED DOWN IN FACE OF HAMDI'S STRONG REACTION AND ASSURED HAMDI OF THEIR SUPPORT. ASNAG POINTED OUT THAT THIS INCIDENT, HOWEVER, DEMONSTRATES SAUDI INABILITY TO FULLY COMPREHEND WHAT IS GOING ON IN YEMEN.

4. ASNAG SPOKE DISPARAGINGLY SEVERAL TIMES OF THE SAUDI AMBASSADOU HERE, DESCRIBING HIM AS "STUPID AND DANGEROUS". ASNAG INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE SEEING THE SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE IN AN EFFORT TO COUNTERACT SOME OF THE MISINFORMATION WHICH THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR IS PRESENTLY SPREADING. I TOLD ASNAG THAT I TOO HAD REQUESTED MY MILITARY ATTACHE TO CONTACT HIS SAUDI COUNTERPART FOR THE SAME PURPOSE.

5. ASNAG SAID THAT WHILE WAITING FOR A REPLY FROM SULTAN CONCERNING THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO RIYADH, HE IS NOW ALSO ENGAGED IN MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR A "STATE VISIT" OF PRESIDENT HAMDI TO ABU DHABI SOMETIME LATER THIS MONTH. ASNAG POINTED  
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OUT THAT SAUDIS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE YEMENIS CANNOT JUST SIT AROUND WAITING FOR THEM TO MOVE AND MUST TRY TO MAKE SOME ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. ASNAG HASTENED TO ADD, HOWEVER, THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE STATE VISIT IS TO BRING PRESSURE ON THE SAUDIS TO MOVE RATHER THAN TO PLAY OFF THE SAUDIS AND THE ABU DHABIANS. ASNAG STRESSED THAT YEMEN APPRECIATES SAUDI ARABIA'S CURRENT PRE-EMINENT ROLE IN THE PENINSULA AND WISHES TO COOPERATE FULLY IF ONLY THE SAUDIS ON THEIR SIDE WILL DO THEIR SHARE.

6. FINALLY, ASNAG SUGGESTED THAT I CALL ON PRESIDENT HAMDI TOMORROW MORNING AND GIVE HIM THE SAME BRIEFING ON THIS SUBJECT AS I HAD JUST PRESENTED. HE SAID THAT HE WISHES TO HAVE CLOSE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE

US AND YEMENI EFFORTS TO GET THROUGH TO THE SAUDIS AND  
WANTED PRESIDENT HAMDY KEPT FULLY AND DIRECTLY INFORMED  
BOTH BY HIMSELF AS WELL AS BY ME.  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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